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VIOLENCE IN EL SALVADOR DEPLORED

GREENWICH, Conn. -- The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church has expressed its repulsion to the violence that has prevailed in El Salvador for the past few years and has called for efforts to seek a solution to those problems that will enable the "Salvadoran people to live in a true participatory democracy."

At its Feb. 25-26 meeting here, the 44-member Council issued a call for a solution based on love, not hate and armament, and on "the respect of life, integrity, dignity and liberty of the human being."

Noting that approximately 12,000 persons were killed in political violence in El Salvador in 1980, the Council joined many others -- including the diocesan convention of the Episcopal Church in El Salvador, Archbishop Robert Runcie of Canterbury, and Presiding Bishop John M. Allin of the Episcopal Church -- in calling for prayers and a non-violent effort to solve the internal problems of that country.

The Council's resolution asked the Organization of American States "to take prompt and urgent action to establish a peace-making presence and process within El Salvador and secure a policy of noninterference and nonintervention from all external parties."

The Council urged Episcopalians to continue to pray for the restoration of peace in that strife-torn country and assured Salvadoreans of the Church's prayers and concern.

Another resolution was approved by the Council, urging the United States government "to offer with all deliberate speed" refuge and asylum to those who have been forced to flee from El Salvador. The Council voted to send this request to President Reagan, the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. ambassador in El Salvador and the Episcopal Church in that country.

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In other action, the Council took note of the fact that three Anglican missionaries in Iran -- John and Audrey Coleman and Jean Waddell -- have been released by the Iranian government and have departed for London.

The Council commended the Archbishop of Canterbury, Robert Runcie, for his initiatives and assistance in securing the release of the three missionaries. Terry Waite, an assistant to the Archbishop, made several trips to Iran and he is thought to have been instrumental in securing their release.

The Council also noted with gratitude the release of the 52 American hostages in January.

The Council assured the Anglican Church of Iran -- including the exiled Bishop H. B. Dehqani-Tafti, the priests and lay persons -- of "its love, concern and prayers. . . during this time of its persecution. . . ." The secretary of the Council was directed to send the full resolution to the Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop Dehqani-Tafti.

Resolutions dealing with problems in Namibia and the Middle East were also adopted by the Council. With regard to Namibia, the Council reaffirmed its September 1975 action "supporting the position that self-determination, independence and territorial integrity of Namibia are necessary prerequisites for peace in that troubled land."

The Council also commended the United Nations-initiated negotiations at a recent conference in Geneva in preparation for the later consideration of the situation by the UN General Assembly.

Greetings, prayers and continued concern were expressed by the Council for the Namibian churches, and especially to Namibia's exiled Anglican Bishop Colin Winter, to Suffragan Bishop James Kauluma and the clergy and members in the diocese and province.

The Council took note of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Episcopal Churchmen for South Africa, a national independent organization which works for a free Southern Africa.

The Council approved a resolution which points out that the section on Israeli-Palestinian matters in the National Council of Churches' Policy Statement on the Middle East, adopted last November, does not represent the Episcopal Church's policy as established by the 1979 General Convention. The Episcopal delegation to the National Council had tried to amend that section of the National Council's policy statement, particularly the assertion that the Palestine Liberation Organization is "the only organized voice" of Palestinians.

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Executive Council/Episcopal Church
Greenwich, Conn., Feb. 25-26, 1981

RESOLUTION ON EL SALVADOR

Resolved, That this Council joins with the Diocesan Convention of the Episcopal Church in El Salvador in expressing its repulsion to violence coming from different sectors and calls for reflection and positive action in order to find by way of Christian love, and not by hate and armament, the solution that permits the Salvadorean people to live in a true participatory democracy based on the respect of life, integrity, dignity and liberty of the human being; and be it further

Resolved, That the Organization of American States be encouraged to take prompt and urgent action to establish a peace making presence and process within El Salvador and secure a policy of noninterference and nonintervention from all external parties; and be it further

Resolved, That to this end this Council urges that all military arms be stopped from whatever source and that such an agreement be promoted and supervised by the Organization of American States; and be it further

Resolved, That the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Robert Runcie, and the Presiding Bishop, the Rt. Rev. John M. Allin, be commended for their public statements concerning the continued violence in El Salvador; and be it further

Resolved, That all the people of El Salvador be assured of our constant prayers, attention and assistance during this period of civil turmoil; and be it further

Resolved, That the Episcopal Church continue to pray in public and private devotions for the prompt restoration of peace in the Salvadorean nation; and be it further

Resolved, That this council express its appreciation to World and National Staff of the Church Center for working with the leadership of the Diocese of El Salvador, the various relief and development agencies, and the United States government policy makers to achieve a just and durable peace, and a program of reconstruction and rehabilitation in El Salvador; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be made available to the Episcopal Church in El Salvador, the U.S. Department of State, Ecumenical agencies, the Organization of American States, and such other agencies and involved parties as feasible.

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DP, DX

